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A Coming of Age Debutantes Ball

Marking their passage into adulthood, the La Femmes organization in Portland brought together their young women to celebrate at the Marriott in downtown last month. The debutantes honored attend classes in etiquette, do well in school and follow a moral code of behavior that would encourage them to live a moral life.

Peace Group Focus: Difficult People

The Oregon Peace Institute will sponsor a workshop to explore self-help tools in dealing with difficult people and situations.

"Why are all these difficult people

making my life miserable, and what can I do about it?" will be led by Stan Sitnick on July 17th from 6:30-9 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW Jefferson, Room 201. Sitnick

is the coordinator of the Clackamas County Dispute Resolution Center. He has been a therapist, mediator, facilitator and trainer in private practice. Pre-register by calling 503-725-8192.

Powell's Books Challenge

Michael Powell, of Powell's Books, has donated \$15,000 in books to the Second Chance on Broadway Thrift Store. He's also challenging other local businesses to match, dollar for dollar, his gift through July 20.

Second Chance is a business enterprise of Central City Concern, an organization that provides pathways to self-sufficiency through active intervention in poverty and homelessness.

Second Chance also gives the

community an alternative site for donating clothing and household items for use by residents in the Letty Owings Center, another Central City Concern program.

For more information, call (503) 284-0277.

Utility Offers Summer Safety Tips

Summer vacation means that young people are taking off for playgrounds, open fields, parks and just about any location where they can fly kites, climb trees or play ball.

Although Pacific Power doesn't have "kite-eating" trees made famous by Charlie Brown cartoons, the electric utility does have power poles, overhead wires and substations to stay away from when seeking the best places for outdoor fun.

"Electrical facilities overhead wires, poles, substations or ground-mounted transformers are not at all good places

to play," said Gary LeMoine, Pacific Power's corporate safety director. "The danger is very real and could be deadly."

Pacific Power offers the following tips for a safe summer:

- Keep all kites away from overhead power lines. If a kite does become tangled in electrical wire, make no attempt to remove it! Call Pacific Power at 1-888-221-7070.
- Check trees for overhead wires running near or through limbs and branches before climbing. If lines are present, do not climb the tree for

any reason.

• Never climb a substation fence. Fences protect people from a serious hazard. If a ball or other personal property lands inside a substation fence, call Pacific Power at 1-888-221-7070.

• Never poke, pry or climb tan or green boxed ground-mounted transformers. They're safe while sealed, but pose a threat if tampered with.

"We encourage everyone to remember these simple safety rules and help ensure a safe and pleasant summer for all," said Lemoine.

More Families Choose Adoption

Adoptions of children from foster care have continued to increase dramatically because of both state and federal adoption reform initiatives.

The State Office for Services to Children and Families finalized 831 adoptions in the last fiscal year, compared to 665 adoptions in the year earlier. "The success of the state's adoption program in achieving permanent placements for children is the result of strong relationships with community partners," said Ramona Foley, SCF administrator.

Partners include the Special Needs Adoption Coalition, the Boys and Girls Aid Society, the Northwest Adoption Exchange and more than three dozen out-of-state private adoption agencies that refer prospective adoptive families.

The goal of the Adoption and Safe Families Act, passed by Congress in 1997 and implemented in Oregon in 1999, is to move children more quickly from foster care to permanency.

For more than a decade, the number of children in state custody who are free for adoption has grown from fewer than 500 per year to more than 900 per year.

The number of adoptions, however, should begin to level off over the next several years as officials continue to make strides in reducing the number of abused and neglected children coming into state custody.

For more information about becoming a foster or adoptive parent, call SCF at (800) 331-0503 or the special Needs Adoption Coalition at (800) 342-6688.

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